

Message Text

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51

ACTION SS-30

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P 251055Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5602

S E C R E T KABUL 7555

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AF

SUBJECT: WAHID ABDULLAH VISIT

REF: STATE 209586

1. NAIM WAS OUT OF KABUL WHEN REFTEL RECEIVED. I SAW HIM ALONE AT FONMIN FOR LENGTHY DISCUSSION MORNING OF OCTOBER 25 IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS RETURN.

2. FOLLOWING CAREFULLY GUIDANCE IN PARA FOUR REFTEL, I EXPLAINED REASONS WHY WAHID ABDULLAH HAD NOT BEEN ABLE SEE PRESIDENT NIXON THIS WEEK, STRESSING ENORMOUS PRESSURES GENERATED BY ME CRISIS.

ALSO ADDED SOME DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT WASHINGTON POLITICAL CLIMATE GLEANED FROM VOA AND WIRELESS FILE WHICH ABVIOUSLY ADDED FURTHER TO SQUEEZE ON PRESIDENTIAL SCHEDULE. MADE EVERY EFFORT ASSURE DAOUD THROUGH NAIM THAT NO RPT NO DIPLOMATIC SLIGHT OR POLITICAL SIGNAL SHOULD BE READ FROM SEQUENCE OF EVENTS. HINTED THAT MORE WARNING OR LEAD TIME FROM GOA MIGHT HAVE HELPED, BUT THAT PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE IN PARTICULAR WEEK INVOLVED TURNED OUT TO BE INSURMOUNTABLE OBSTACLE. CONCLUDED THAT ABDULLAH'S VISIT PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY FOR VERY HELPFUL TALKS IN ANY EVENT.

3. NAIM LISTENED INTENTLY AND RESPONDED POLITELY BUT COLDLY. HE WAS VISIBLY UNPERSUADED. SAID DAOUD FELT DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT TREND OF ME CRISIS, HAD IMPORTANT PERSONAL MESSAGE FOR PRESIDENT
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NIXON EMBODIED IN A LETTER, AND TO GIVE IT ALL POSSIBLE EMPHASIS HAD ENTRUSTED IT TO HEAD OF HIS FOREIGN MINISTRY WITH INSTRUCTION THAT HE DELIVER IT PERSONALLY TO PRESIDENT NIXON. PERSONAL DELIVERY WAS, NAIM SAID, ESSENTIAL SO THAT WAHID ABDULLAH COULD

ELABORATE ORALLY ON TEXT. WHILE HE UNDERSTOOD PRESSURES ON PRESIDENT'S TIME, HE COULD NOT BELIEVE THAT "A FEW MINUTES COULD NOT HAVE BEEN FOUND." HE REGRETTED DEEPLY THAT PRESIDENT DAOUD'S PERSONAL ENVOY HAD NOT BEEN PERMITTED TO DELIVER HIS MESSAGE "AS WOULD BE NORMAL DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE WITH OTHER NATIONS." DESPITE MY STATEMENTS, HE SAID, "THEY COULD NOT AVOID DRAWING CERTAIN CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS RESULT."

4. NAIM'S INTENSE INTEREST AND CONCERN ABOUT ME CRISIS (REPORTED SEPTEL) NOW CONVINCE ME THAT DAOUD MESSAGE WAS IN FACT A PERSONAL INITIATIVE OF NAIM'S. HIS REACTION COULD WELL PARTLY REFLECT CHAGRIN AT HAVING DAOUD SEE IT ABORTED. NONETHELESS, AFGHAN PRIDE HAS UNDOUBTEDLY BEEN SEVERELY WOUNDED. WE MUST ASSUME THAT DAOUD WILL FIND A WAY IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO SHOW THAT EVEN REMOTE ASIAN NATIONS ARE NOT POWERLESS TO MAKE THINGS LESS COMFORTABLE FOR THE US.
LEWIS

SECRET

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